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ABSTRACT

A survey of births of Hispanic parentage in 1985 in 23 states and the District of Columbia, where approximately 92 percent of America's Hispanic population resides, yielded the following statistical information: (1) 372,814 babies were born to Hispanic mothers; (2) nearly two-thirds of the mothers were Mexican; (3) Puerto Rican, Central and South American, and other Hispanic women each accounted for about ten percent of the births; (4) three percent of the mothers were Cuban; (5) 95.4 percent of Hispanic births are White, however, there are substantial variations in the racial composition of these births; (6) the birth rate was 23.3 live births per 1,000 population; (7) the fertility rate was 94.0 live births per 1,000 women aged 15 to 44 years; (8) teenage childbearing is relatively common, particularly among Mexicans and Puerto Ricans; (9) nearly one-fifth of births to Mexican mothers was a fourth or higher order birth; (10) unmarried mothers accounted for 3 in 10 births; (11) 56 percent of the mothers had completed high school; (12) 45 percent of the mothers were born in the United States, 55 percent were born in Puerto Rico or countries outside of the United States; (13) 61 percent of the mothers began prenatal care in the first trimester of pregnancy; (14) 6.2 percent of the babies weighed less than 2,500 grams at birth, and 8.3 percent had one-minute Apgar scores of less than seven; (15) preterm birth was reported for 11 percent of all Hispanic infants; and (16) Hispanic-origin mothers accounted for 17 percent of the births in 1985. Data are presented on seven tables. Methodology is discussed and a list of 12 references is included. (BJV)

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Births of Hispanic Parentage, 1985

by Stephanie J. Ventura, A.M., Division of Vital Statistics

Introduction

In 1985, 23 States and the District of Columbia reported information on births of Hispanic parentage (table 1). Because the vast majority of the Hispanic population in this country (an estimated 92 percent) resides in these States (the Hispanic reporting area), the birth statistics in this report are believed to be representative of fertility for the Hispanic population in the United States (U.S. Bureau of the Census, in press).

Previous publications have described the demographic and health characteristics of Hispanic births occurring in 1978–84 (NCHS, 1981, 1982, 1983, 1984b, 1985, 1987). Additionally, birth and fertility rates by Hispanic origin for each State were computed for 1980, using population information available only from the decennial census (NCHS, 1983, 1984a).

The number of babies born to Hispanic mothers in the reporting area totaled 372,814 in 1985 (table 1), a 7-percent increase over the number reported in the same States for 1984 (346,986) and an 11-percent increase over 1983.

Hispanic-origin mothers accounted for 17 percent of the infants born in the reporting area in 1985, a slight rise over 1983 and 1984 (16 percent). Nearly two-thirds of the Hispanic mothers were Mexican; Puerto Rican, Central and South American, and other Hispanic women each accounted for about 10 percent of Hispanic-origin births; and 3 percent of the Hispanic mothers were Cuban.

The reporting of Hispanic origin of the parents on the birth certificate has improved considerably since 1978, when this information was first tabulated. In 1985 origin of the mother was not available for only 3.6 percent of the births compared with 12.1 percent in 1978. Origin of the father was also better reported in 1985 than in earlier years, but it is still omitted from a substantial number of records, 14.3 percent in 1985 (table 2) compared with 20.2 percent in 1978. For this reason and also because most of the tabulations in this report relate to characteristics of the mother (for example, fertility rates, educational attainment, marital status), births are classified only by origin of the mother in tables 1 and 3–7 and in the text.

Race of child

The vast majority of births to Hispanic mothers are white, 95.4 percent in 1985. However, there are substantial variations in the racial composition of births of the various Hispanic groups, as shown in table 3.

Birth and fertility rates

Birth and fertility rates for the Hispanic population increased in 1985 compared with 1983 and 1984. The rates continued to be higher than for the non-Hispanic population, 50 percent on the average. (See table 4 for 1985 rates.) The increase between 1984 and 1985 was primarily associated with the 3–4 percent rise in rates for Mexicans. The birth rate for the Hispanic population was 23.3 live births per 1,000 population in 1985, 3 percent higher than in 1984 (22.7); for the non-Hispanic population the birth rate was 15.4 in 1985, 1 percent above the rate for 1984 (15.2). The fertility rate for Hispanic women was 94.0 live births per 1,000 women aged 15–44 years, 3 percent higher than in 1984 (91.5) and 46 percent higher than the rate for non-Hispanic women (64.6).

The birth rate for the Mexican population rose 4 percent, from 22.9 in 1984 to 23.8 in 1985. The rate for Puerto Ricans was 18.2, for Cubans it was 10.5, and for "other Hispanics" it was 29.8. Because of sampling variability associated with the populations used to compute these rates, the year-to-year changes in the rates are not statistically significant.

Variations in fertility rates were comparable to those for birth rates. The fertility rate for Mexican women increased 3 percent, from 95.8 to 98.5. The rate for Puerto Rican women was 66.5 in 1985, the rate for Cuban women was 51.2, and the rate for "other Hispanic" women was 109.0.

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The birth and fertility rates presented in this report were computed for the total of 11 States for which the necessary population data by Hispanic origin were available from the U.S. Bureau of the Census. The 11 States were Arizona, California, Colorado, Florida, Illinois, Indiana, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, Ohio, and Texas. The population data needed to compute these rates for the non-Hispanic population by race were not available. In 1985, 98 percent of the births in the Hispanic reporting area were to residents of these 11 States.

Age of mother and live-birth order

Teenage childbearing is relatively common among Hispanic women, particularly Mexican and Puerto Rican women. In 1985, 17 percent of births to Mexican mothers and 21 percent of births to Puerto Rican mothers were to women under 20 years of age, similar to the level of teenage births for black non-Hispanic women (23 percent) but substantially higher than for Cuban (7 percent) and white non-Hispanic women (10 percent) (table 5).

Nearly 1 in every 5 births to Mexican mothers was a fourth or higher order birth (18.4 percent) in 1985, the highest proportion observed among any Hispanic or non-Hispanic group (table 6). The proportion of fourth and higher order births varied widely among other groups, from 5.5 and 7.5 percent for births to Cuban and white non-Hispanic women to 11.0–14.1 percent for births to other specific Hispanic and black non-Hispanic women.

Births to unmarried mothers

Unmarried mothers accounted for 3 in 10 births to Hispanic women in 1985 (table 6), but the proportions for individual origin groups differed considerably, ranging from 16 percent of Cuban-origin births to 51 percent of Puerto Rican-origin births. The comparable proportions for non-Hispanic births were 12 percent for white and 61 percent for black births. These proportions have risen steadily for both Hispanic and non-Hispanic women in recent years.

As would be expected, nonmarital childbearing is much more frequent among teenage mothers than among mothers aged 20 years and older, regardless of origin group (table 7). Among Hispanic teenagers, the proportions of nonmarital births ranged from 37 percent for Cuban to 74 percent for Puerto Rican women; among non-Hispanic teens, 43 percent of white births and 90 percent of black births were to unmarried women.

The proportions of nonmarital births were considerably lower for all origin groups for ages 20 years and older. They ranged from 15 to 45 percent among Hispanic women compared with 9 percent for white non-Hispanic and 52 percent for black non-Hispanic women.

Educational attainment of mother

The available data indicate that the educational attainment of Hispanic mothers has risen considerably in recent years, although it is still substantially below that of non-Hispanic mothers (table 6). Because educational attainment is not reported on the birth certificates in California and Texas, data are available for only 35 percent of all Hispanic births and only 15 percent of Mexican births in 1985. Overall, 56 percent of Hispanic-origin mothers giving birth in 1985 had completed high school compared with 84 percent of white non-Hispanic mothers and 67 percent of black non-Hispanic mothers. The proportions for specific Hispanic groups ranged from 41 percent for Mexican mothers to 79 percent for Cuban mothers. The largest gain in educational attainment was measured for Puerto Rican mothers, among whom 53 percent of those giving birth in 1985 had completed high school compared with 45 percent in 1980.

Country of birth

Among Hispanic women giving birth in 1985, 45 percent were born in the United States and 55 percent in Puerto Rico or countries outside the United States (table 6). There continue to be wide variations in the proportions of U.S.-born mothers among the various origin groups, from 47 and 51 percent for Mexican and Puerto Rican women to 3 percent for Central and South American women. These proportions are somewhat higher for teenage mothers than for older mothers (table 7).

On the average, U.S.-born Hispanic mothers are about twice as likely to be teenaged as are foreign- or Puerto Rican-born Hispanic mothers (data are not shown in this report). U.S.-born Hispanic women are somewhat more likely to have completed high school than their foreign- or Puerto Rican-born counterparts, a pattern that has been observed for several years (NCHS, 1987; Ventura and Taffel, 1985).

Prenatal care

Data on prenatal care and selected measures of the health of newborn infants show that although Hispanic mothers (except Cubans) begin prenatal care later than white non-Hispanic mothers, the levels of low birth weight and low Apgar scores are comparable (table 6). Overall, 61 percent of Hispanic mothers and black non-Hispanic mothers began prenatal care in the first trimester of pregnancy in 1985 compared with 82 percent of white non-Hispanic mothers. The proportions for specific origin groups ranged from 58 percent for Puerto Rican women to 83 percent for Cuban women. Of all Hispanic mothers, 12 percent received delayed prenatal care (beginning in the third trimester of pregnancy) or no care (a range of 4 to 16 percent). Regardless of origin, teenage mothers are less likely to begin prenatal care early and more likely to receive delayed or no care than are older mothers (table 7). Levels of delayed or no care were highest for Puerto Rican teenage mothers (21 percent) and were substantial for other Hispanic-origin groups (except Cubans) as well (16–19 percent).

Birth weight, Apgar scores, and preterm birth

In spite of their relatively less favorable status with respect to receipt of prenatal care, births to Hispanic women have levels of low birth weight and low Apgar scores that are comparable to those of babies born to white non-Hispanic mothers, as indicated above. In 1985, 6.2 percent of Hispanic babies weighed less than 2,500 grams at birth (5 pounds 8 ounces) compared with 5.6 percent of white non-Hispanic infants and 12.4 percent of black non-Hispanic infants (table 6). The proportions for specific Hispanic groups ranged from 5.7 percent for Central and South American babies to 8.7 percent for Puerto Rican babies. The proportions of infants with 1-minute Apgar scores less than 7 averaged 8.3 percent for Hispanic babies compared with 8.9 percent of white non-Hispanic and 11.9 percent of black non-Hispanic infants. Low 5-minute Apgar scores were reported for 1.6 percent of Hispanic babies compared with 1.5 percent of white non-Hispanic and 3.1 percent of black non-Hispanic babies.

Preterm birth (less than 37 weeks of gestation) was reported for 11 percent of all Hispanic infants compared with 8 percent of white non-Hispanic and 17 percent of black non-Hispanic infants. The proportions of preterm births among Hispanic babies ranged from 9 percent (Cuban) to 13 percent (Puerto Rican).

In an effort to clarify the relationships between Hispanic origin and levels of low birth weight, the birth weight data were further classified by the age of the mother (table 7) and by the month of pregnancy in which prenatal care began and the educational attainment of the mother (data are not shown in this report). Levels of low birth weight were lower for infants whose mothers were aged 20 years and older, who began prenatal care early, and who were high school graduates. But even for babies born to teenagers, to women with delayed or no prenatal care, or to women who did not complete high school, the proportions of low-weight infants were still relatively favorable for Hispanic-origin, especially Mexican, babies. It is difficult to account for this pattern, one that has been observed for several years. One factor may be the much lower incidence of smoking among Hispanic than among non-Hispanic women. Unpublished data from the 1980 National Natality Survey conducted by the National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS) show that only 10 percent of Mexican women, compared with 27 percent of white non-Hispanic women, smoked during pregnancy. Information from the 1985 National Health Interview Survey, also conducted by NCHS, confirms a significantly lower rate of smoking among Hispanic women (NCHS, in press).

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Symbols

- - -	Data not available
. . .	Category not applicable
-	Quantity zero
0.0	Quantity more than zero but less than 0.05
Z	Quantity more than zero but less than 500 where numbers are rounded to thousands
*	Figure does not meet standard of reliability or precision

Table 1. Live births by Hispanic origin of mother and by race of child for mothers of non-Hispanic origin: Total of 23 reporting States and the District of Columbia and each State, 1985

State	Origin of mother									
	All origins	Hispanic					Non-Hispanic			
		Total	Mexican	Puerto Rican	Cuban	Central and South American	Other and unknown Hispanic	Total[1]	White	Black	Not stated
All reporting States	2,298,287	372,814	242,976	35,147	10,024	40,985	43,682	1,841,641	1,384,671	350,108	83,832
Arizona	59,348	13,423	12,641	89	17	87	589	45,469	36,578	2,400	456
Arkansas	35,221	174	121	7	5	5	36	34,608	26,091	8,189	439
California	470,951	149,184	117,764	1,638	856	16,760	12,166	317,553	223,782	43,810	4,214
Colorado	55,123	7,486	2,654	72	12	80	4,668	44,965	40,654	2,628	2,672
District of Columbia	9,870	500	186	8	-	261	45	7,975	1,124	6,760	1,395
Florida	163,816	17,090	2,269	1,883	6,646	2,466	3,826	144,505	103,993	38,541	2,221
Georgia	96,340	837	277	160	68	146	186	93,872	60,109	32,647	1,631
Hawaii	18,307	1,690	247	534	18	48	843	16,592	4,211	846	25
Illinois	180,737	16,779	9,832	2,498	250	942	3,257	159,615	118,431	37,906	4,343
Indiana	80,946	1,288	893	152	20	55	168	76,295	67,276	8,368	3,363
Kansas	39,679	1,297	986	71	14	46	180	34,791	30,700	3,008	3,591
Maine	16,903	116	22	7	38	10	39	15,828	15,557	65	959
Mississippi	43,449	134	39	11	6	20	58	42,736	22,337	19,942	579
Nebraska	25,551	563	497	9	3	11	43	23,808	21,995	1,334	1,180
Nevada	15,325	1,345	808	20	21	57	439	11,756	9,881	794	2,224
New Jersey	105,566	11,836	267	6,294	1,058	2,928	1,289	83,405	61,607	18,947	10,325
New Mexico	27,757	11,279	1,983	40	13	28	9,215	16,458	11,770	623	20
New York	259,465	38,577	1,060	20,268	677	13,429	3,143	203,198	147,251	47,874	17,690
North Dakota	11,721	86	47	6	-	7	26	11,111	10,031	137	524
Ohio	160,474	1,956	794	622	45	111	384	151,236	127,157	22,389	7,282
Tennessee	66,757	248	71	19	9	26	123	50,322	38,057	11,816	16,187
Texas	308,164	94,888	88,335	686	232	3,418	2,217	211,985	164,832	40,734	1,291
Utah	37,451	1,515	883	43	14	36	539	35,500	33,666	266	436
Wyoming	9,366	523	300	10	2	8	203	8,058	7,581	84	785

[1] Includes races other than white and black.

Table 2. Live births by Hispanic origin of mother and father: Total of 23 reporting States and the District of Columbia, 1985

Origin of father	Origin of mother								
	All origins	Hispanic						Non-Hispanic	Not stated
		Total	Mexican	Puerto Rican	Cuban	Central and South American	Other and unknown Hispanic		
All origins	2,298,287	372,814	242,976	35,147	10,024	40,985	43,682	1,841,641	83,832
Hispanic	342,186	289,146	199,079	24,394	7,383	32,170	26,120	52,046	994
Mexican	229,727	200,644	192,257	968	260	3,765	3,394	28,679	404
Puerto Rican	30,581	24,279	1,272	20,640	314	1,365	688	6,035	267
Cuban	10,888	8,383	510	583	6,056	836	398	2,466	39
Central and South American	35,722	31,849	3,290	1,741	523	25,865	430	3,776	97
Other and unknown Hispanic	35,268	23,991	1,750	462	230	339	21,210	11,090	187
Non-Hispanic	1,627,015	46,323	22,903	4,331	1,749	4,485	12,855	1,575,425	5,267
Not stated	329,086	37,345	20,994	6,422	892	4,330	4,707	214,170	77,571

Table 3. Number of live births and percent distribution by race of child, according to Hispanic origin of mother: Total of 23 reporting States and the District of Columbia, 1985

Race of child	Origin of mother								
		Hispanic							
	All origins	Total	Mexican	Puerto Rican	Cuban	Central and South American	Other and unknown Hispanic	Non-Hispanic	Not stated
	Number								
All races	2,298,287	372,814	242,976	35,147	10,024	40,985	43,682	1,841,641	83,832
White	1,808,679	355,493	238,030	31,700	9,608	35,736	40,419	1,384,671	68,515
Black	374,135	11,114	2,227	2,752	351	4,505	1,279	350,108	12,913
Other	115,473	6,207	2,719	695	65	744	1,984	106,862	2,404
	Percent distribution								
All races	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
White	78.7	95.4	98.0	90.2	95.8	87.2	92.5	75.2	81.7
Black	16.3	3.0	0.9	7.8	3.5	11.0	2.9	19.0	15.4
Other	5.0	1.7	1.1	2.0	0.6	1.8	4.5	5.8	2.9

Table 4. Birth and fertility rates, by Hispanic origin of mother: Total of 11 States, 1985

Measure	Origin of mother						
		Hispanic					
	All origins	Total	Mexican	Puerto Rican	Cuban	Other Hispanic[1]	Non-Hispanic[2]
Birth rate[3]	16.5	23.3	23.8	18.2	10.5	29.8	15.4
Fertility rate[4]	68.8	94.0	98.5	66.5	51.2	109.0	64.6

[1]Includes Central and South American and other and unknown Hispanic origin.
[2]Includes origin not stated.
[3]Rate per 1,000 total population.
[4]Rate per 1,000 women aged 15–44 years.

NOTE: The 11 States are Arizona, California, Colorado, Florida, Illinois, Indiana, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, Ohio, and Texas.

Table 5. Live births by age and Hispanic origin of mother and by race of child for mothers of non-Hispanic origin: Total of 23 reporting States and the District of Columbia, 1985

Age of mother	Origin of mother									
		Hispanic						Non-Hispanic		
	All origins[1]	Total	Mexican	Puerto Rican	Cuban	Central and South American	Other and unknown Hispanic	Total[2]	White	Black
All ages	2,298,287	372,814	242,976	35,147	10,024	40,985	43,682	1,841,641	1,384,671	350,108
Under 15 years	6,391	1,250	885	162	14	52	137	4,933	1,414	3,397
15–19 years	288,089	60,262	41,589	7,186	693	3,294	7,500	217,799	132,510	77,548
15 years	15,701	3,401	2,413	439	26	111	412	11,757	5,012	6,367
16 years	33,416	7,376	5,121	898	69	284	1,004	24,884	13,099	11,006
17 years	55,097	11,948	8,316	1,486	111	529	1,506	41,283	24,243	15,640
18 years	79,361	16,621	11,498	1,905	197	924	2,097	59,944	37,240	20,367
19 years	104,514	20,916	14,241	2,458	290	1,446	2,481	79,931	52,916	24,168
20–24 years	696,527	124,590	82,144	12,425	3,314	11,974	14,733	547,907	404,385	119,143
25–29 years	726,444	103,815	66,218	8,761	3,349	13,385	12,102	596,526	473,864	87,371
30–34 years	425,504	56,842	35,612	4,524	1,911	8,350	6,445	351,695	279,565	44,911
35–39 years	135,929	21,788	13,643	1,776	616	3,361	2,392	108,410	82,737	15,256
40–44 years	18,644	4,088	2,765	298	118	547	360	13,819	9,890	2,365
45–49 years	759	179	120	15	9	22	13	552	306	117

[1]Includes origin not stated.
[2]Includes races other than white and black.

Table 6. Percent of births with selected characteristics, by Hispanic origin of mother and by race of child for mothers of non-Hispanic origin: Total of 23 reporting States and the District of Columbia, 1985

Characteristic	Origin of mother									
		Hispanic						Non-Hispanic		
	All origins[1]	Total	Mexican	Puerto Rican	Cuban	Central and South American	Other and unknown Hispanic	Total[2]	White	Black
First births	41.4	36.2	33.8	40.6	45.4	40.0	40.6	42.3	43.2	39.3
Fourth and higher order births	10.1	15.8	18.4	11.9	5.5	11.0	11.2	9.1	7.5	14.1
Births to unmarried mothers	22.9	29.5	25.7	51.1	16.1	34.9	31.1	21.6	12.1	61.0
Mothers completing 12 years or more of school[3]	78.5	55.5	41.0	53.4	78.9	63.0	63.5	80.6	84.3	66.9
Mothers born in United States	84.0	45.4	47.3	51.1	11.7	2.5	78.6	91.4	95.4	92.0
Prenatal care:										
Beginning in 1st trimester	74.5	61.2	60.0	58.3	82.5	60.6	65.8	77.1	81.5	60.5
Beginning in 3d trimester or no care	6.6	12.4	12.9	15.5	3.7	12.5	9.4	5.4	4.0	10.7
Births of low birth weight[4]	6.8	6.2	5.8	8.7	6.0	5.7	6.8	6.9	5.6	12.4
Born prior to 37 weeks of gestation	10.0	10.8	10.8	12.6	9.0	10.1	10.1	9.8	7.9	17.3
1-minute Apgar scores less than 7[5]	9.4	8.3	8.6	7.7	6.3	7.2	10.1	9.5	8.9	11.9
5-minute Apgar scores less than 7[5]	1.8	1.6	1.7	1.7	1.3	1.5	1.6	1.8	1.5	3.1

[1] Includes origin not stated.
[2] Includes races other than white and black.
[3] Excludes data for California and Texas, which did not report educational attainment.
[4] Birth weight of less than 2,500 grams (5 lb. 8 oz.).
[5] Excludes data for California and Texas, which did not report 1- and 5-minute Apgar scores.

Table 7. Percent of births to teenage mothers and to mothers aged 20 years and over, by selected characteristics, Hispanic origin of mother, and by race of child for mothers of non-Hispanic origin: Total of 23 reporting States and the District of Columbia, 1985

Age of mother and characteristic	Origin of mother								
		Hispanic					Non-Hispanic		
	All origins[1]	Total	Mexican	Puerto Rican	Cuban	Central and South American	Other and unknown Hispanic	Total[2]	White	Black
Under 20 years of age										
Births to unmarried mothers	58.5	51.9	45.8	73.9	37.2	59.1	62.5	60.4	42.5	90.2
Mothers completing 12 years or more of school[3]	37.3	26.5	22.3	24.7	34.3	35.6	30.7	38.6	40.6	35.4
Mothers born in United States	---	61.7	60.6	65.4	33.8	7.6	90.2	---	---	---
Prenatal care:										
Beginning in 1st trimester	51.8	47.1	47.3	45.4	61.5	46.3	46.5	53.0	57.7	45.5
Beginning in 3d trimester or no care	13.4	17.8	17.7	21.4	6.7	18.9	15.9	12.2	10.2	15.4
Births of low birth weight[4]	9.3	7.6	7.2	9.5	6.9	7.0	8.6	9.7	7.7	13.3
20 years of age and over										
Births to unmarried mothers	17.7	25.1	21.5	45.1	14.5	32.8	24.4	16.3	8.9	52.3
Mothers completing 12 years or more of school[3]	84.5	61.1	45.0	61.2	82.4	64.9	70.5	86.6	89.1	76.8
Mothers born in United States	---	42.2	44.4	47.3	10.0	2.0	76.2	---	---	---
Prenatal care:										
Beginning in 1st trimester	77.8	64.0	62.7	61.7	84.1	61.8	69.8	80.4	84.1	65.0
Beginning in 3d trimester or no care	5.6	11.4	11.9	13.9	3.5	11.9	8.1	4.5	3.3	9.3
Births of low birth weight[4]	6.5	5.9	5.5	8.5	6.0	5.6	6.5	6.5	5.4	12.1

[1] Includes origin not stated.
[2] Includes races other than white and black.
[3] Excludes data for California and Texas, which did not report educational attainment.
[4] Birth weight of less than 2,500 grams (5 lb. 8 oz.).

Technical notes

Sources of data

Concurrent with the 1978 revision of the U.S. Standard Certificate of Live Birth, the National Center for Health Statistics recommended that States add items to identify the Hispanic or ethnic origin of the newborn's mother and father. In 1985, 23 States and the District of Columbia included questions on origin, selecting one of two basic formats. The first format was an open-ended item to obtain the specific origin or descent of each parent (for example, Italian, Mexican, German, Puerto Rican, English, or Cuban). The second format was directed toward the Hispanic population and asked whether the mother and father were of Spanish origin. If so, the specific origin, such as Mexican, Puerto Rican, or Cuban, was to be indicated.

Birth data shown in this report are based on 100 percent of the births occurring in the 23 reporting States and the District of Columbia. The data shown in the tables are for births to all residents of the reporting area, regardless of where the births occurred. Births occurring in nonreporting States to residents of the reporting area are included in the "not stated" origin category.

Racial classification

Racial designation in this report is that of the child, which is determined from the race of the parents as entered on the birth certificate. When the parents are of different races and one parent is white, the child is assigned the other parent's race. When the parents are of different races and neither parent is white, the child is assigned the father's race with one exception—if the mother is Hawaiian or part-Hawaiian, the child is considered Hawaiian. When race is missing on the certificate for one parent, the child is assigned the race of the other parent. When race is not reported for either parent, the child is assigned the race of the child on the immediately preceding record.

Population denominators

Birth and fertility rates for 1985 are based on estimates of the Hispanic population from the Current Population Survey (CPS). The populations used to compute the rates in this report for 1985 were derived by averaging the CPS estimates for 1984 and 1986 because estimates of the Hispanic population for selected States and subgroups for 1985 are believed questionable. Beginning with 1986, the CPS figures include estimates of undocumented immigrants (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1987). The effect of this change may be to reduce the levels of the birth and fertility rates by about 1 percent.

Population estimates were provided for 11 States, including Arizona, California, Colorado, Florida, Illinois, Indiana, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, Ohio, and Texas. These estimates were controlled to postcensal independent estimates of the Hispanic population by age and sex for the United States, based on 1980 census data. The population data are based on small samples and may, therefore, be subject to substantial sampling error. Information on the derivation of these estimates and the sampling error is presented in two U.S. Bureau of the Census reports (1987, in press).

Computation of rates

In computing birth and fertility rates for this report, births with not-stated origin of mother are included with non-Hispanic births rather than being distributed. Thus, rates for the Hispanic population are underestimates of the true rates to the extent that the births with not-stated origin of mother for the 11-State area (2.9 percent) are actually to Hispanic mothers. The population with not-stated origin has been imputed. The effect on the rates is believed to be small.

Computation of percents and percent distributions

Births with unknown live-birth order, nativity of mother, educational attainment of mother, month of pregnancy in which prenatal care began, birth weight, period of gestation, and 1- and 5-minute Apgar scores were subtracted from total births before percents and percent distributions were computed.

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